

BY STEWART ALSOP

## LUCKY DICK

**WASHINGTON** — Richard M. Nixon doesn't have the look of a lucky man. A lucky man—the President's old boss, Dwight Eisenhower, for example—exudes a confident air of inevitable triumph. Richard Nixon exudes nothing of the sort—he has the look of a man who rather expects to lose. But in recent years he has been enjoying a phenomenal run of political luck.

He had to have all sorts of lucky breaks, culminating in the self-immolation of the Democrats in Chicago, to become President in the first place. Then came Chappaquiddick. Now—one of the luckiest breaks of all—comes the collapse of Edmund Muskie as the Democratic front runner.

An incumbent President has many advantages, but one above all. His would-be rivals, in their eagerness for the nomination, conveniently tear each other to pieces in advance of the election. Before July 1969, the Democrats seemed certain for once to avoid the tearing-apart process. Edward Kennedy had a clear road ahead, leading to a sure first-ballot nomination by a unified party. Instead, on July 18, the road led to a dark swirl of water beneath a bridge at Chappaquiddick.

A few months ago, it again began to seem that the Democrats would suppress their compulsion to self-destruct. Edmund Muskie was the undoubted favorite of the polls and the pils, and he too seemed to have a clear shot at a first-ballot win, with a real chance at the White House.

### HOW TO STAY ALIVE

Now look at the poor fellow. Everybody agrees that Muskie must win in Wisconsin to stay alive. If he does not win in Wisconsin—especially if he comes in third—all those prestigious Establishment Democrats who bought Muskie Preferred on a rising market will be falling over each other to dump him at any price. And even if he does well in Wisconsin, he will not again have a clear shot at a first-ballot win.

The collapse of Ed Muskie as front runner was sheer luck for Richard Nixon. Luck is good fortune that comes unbidden, and Nixon was not the engineer of Muskie's disaster. Muskie was. He certainly hurt himself with the weeping episode in New Hampshire. He hurt himself more by his tendency to hedge and waffle. All politicians waffle and hedge, of course, but

Senator Muskie did so far too visibly.

Above all, Muskie—or those around him who suppose that the views of The New York Times and the ADA are the views of a majority of the voters—grossly misjudged the political realities. He appeased the left when he should have been busy co-opting the center. The results in Florida suggest how gross was this misjudgment. The right-center candidates—George Wallace, Hubert Humphrey, Henry Jackson—took a whopping 73 per cent of the vote. The left candidates—George McGovern, John Lindsay, Muskie himself—took a measly 22 per cent. True, Florida is a special case—but so is every state.

### HOW TO FILL A VACUUM

There has been something surprisingly amateurish about Muskie's whole effort. There has been nothing amateurish about Hubert Humphrey's campaign. Humphrey used to be a slapdash, catch-as-catch-can campaigner, but by now he is an old pro if ever there was one. He sensed the vacuum left by Muskie, and proceeded to fill it.

As The New York Times reported before the vote, some of Humphrey's campaigning sounded "like echoes of Governor Wallace." An example from one Humphrey radio spot: "Humphrey will stop the flow of your tax dollars to lazy welfare chiselers. He will put your tax dollars to work here at home before giving handouts around the world." On the key busing issue, Humphrey did his share of waffling and hedging, but being a professional, he managed to sound rather verbosely candid.

The question remains: can Humphrey really emulate the phoenix, to win the Democratic nomination a second time? The pros' best answer seems to be: just possibly, but not without one hell of a fight. Humphrey is popular with labor, well-liked by his fellow pros, and a very able man to boot. But 18 per cent of the Florida vote is less than a resounding triumph. And his nomination would undoubtedly be preceded by a great televised brawl with the left during the convention, and followed by the formation of a left party led by Eugene McCarthy in his chosen spoiler's role.

It is hard to imagine a consummation more devoutly to be wished by Richard Nixon. That is why it is also hard to imagine those headlines next July:

DEMOCRATS NOMINATE HUMPHREY. But, then, who else?

By one estimate, Lindsay spent almost \$5 a head for his 7 per cent share of the vote. At that price, Lindsay is going to have to have some remarkably rich friends to keep him in the race. George McGovern's share of the Florida vote was measlier than Lindsay's. Even if he does well in Wisconsin, which is shaping up as the make-or-break primary, it is a lot harder even than in Humphrey's case to visualize those headlines announcing his nomination.

McGovern's nomination would mean a revolutionary transformation of this country's majority party. It would mean the capture of the traditionally internationalist Democratic Party by isolationists, and by what in Europe would certainly be called socialists. To cite one example, McGovern proposes a cutoff in all inherited fortunes at \$500,000. This would in time leave no capitalists worthy of the name, and a capitalist system can hardly operate without capitalists. There is no evidence at all that McGovern has enough popular support to fuel a revolution.

### HOW TO SHOOT FOR '76

Henry Jackson's nomination seems almost as improbable as McGovern's. As for George Wallace, he is to the Democratic Party the man upon the stair. ("Yesterday upon the stair, I met a man who wasn't there. He wasn't there again today—I wish, I wish, he'd go away.") George Wallace isn't going to go away. But he isn't going to be nominated, either. If he were about a foot taller, and looked a little bit more like John Lindsay, and could suppress his compulsion to spit in the wastebasket, and had not tried quite so hard to out-seg his opponents in the past, he might be. But not now.

That leaves Ted Kennedy, and there is by now plenty of evidence that Kennedy is sensible enough to know that 1972 is not his year. An interesting long shot is a Humphrey-Kennedy ticket. A Vice Presidential run could be just what Kennedy needs to prove that he is a modest young man, loyal to his party, and to help erase the memory of Chappaquiddick and to position himself for a clear shot at the White House in 1976. But for 1972, the real winner of the New Hampshire and Florida primaries was that rather mysteriously lucky fellow, Richard Nixon.

## Billie Jean's Revenge

Most tennis fans cared little that the winner of last week's Maureen Connolly Brinker Tournament in Dallas would walk away with \$11,000, the biggest prize in the history of women's tennis. What was really important, they agreed, was the prospect of the first confrontation between Australia's Evonne Goolagong and 17-year-old Chris Evert, the game's two most exciting players. Making her American debut, Evonne dazzled the galleries with her rhinestone-studded outfits, and Chris showed up with a new assortment of brightly colored ribbons for her hair. But while the two youngsters preened themselves for a possible showdown, Billie Jean King brought her own distinctive trademarks to bear on the tournament: pride, determination—and a superb collection of shots. First, she beat Chris in a grueling two-hour match, and then she outlasted Evonne. But in the end, Billie Jean was the victim of a lopsided draw that placed the match's most exciting players in the same bracket—and let Nancy Richey Gunter into the finals and victory.

Still seething over her much-publicized loss to Chris last month, and bitter about Evonne's ranking as the top player of 1971 as a result of her victory at Wimbledon, Billie Jean was determined to show both youngsters that the "old lady" hadn't lost her stuff; and thanks to the absurd draw, she got her first chance in the quarter-finals against Chris. In the most memorable match of the tournament, Billie Jean survived a frustrating tie-breaker loss and painful leg cramps to beat Chris, 6-7, 6-3, 7-5, with a marvelous display of bold shotmaking.

"I started thinking about what I was going to do after I won," said Chris. "I was thinking about playing Evonne."

"I did that once when I was 16," cracked Billie Jean, "and I lost. I've never done it again."

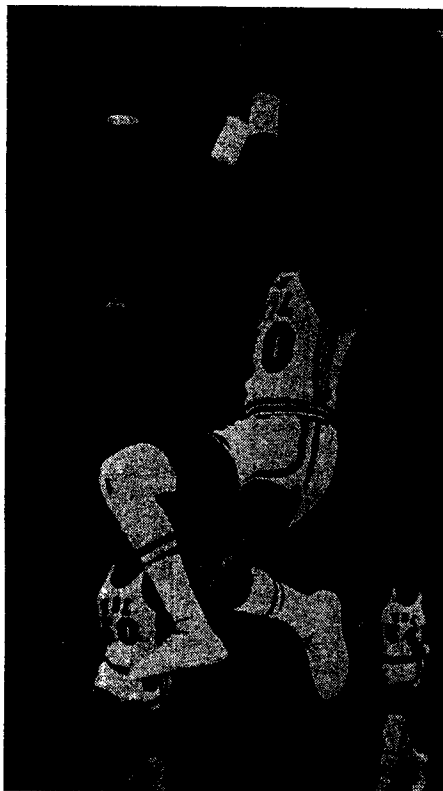
**Lapse:** The next night, Evonne suffered a similar lapse of concentration. Looking unbeatable as she zipped to a first-set win, the pretty, 20-year-old Australian clearly underestimated Billie Jean's tenacious capacity for driving her 28-year-old legs through another two sets. With her temper and her serve under control, Billie Jean took the second set, 6-4, and then romped past Evonne in the deciding set, 6-1. "My mind was gone on a walkabout," said Evonne, using an Aussie expression for daydreaming.

But Billie Jean's brilliant play against her young rivals benefited no one as much as the well-rested Nancy Gunter, who breezed to the finals without dropping a set. Physically and emotionally exhausted, Billie Jean lasted only 65 minutes against her longtime rival—and lost, 7-6, 6-1. But the tournament left one question unanswered: who would've won the Evert-Goolagong dream match?

On that, perhaps nobody could speak with greater authority than Billie Jean—and she had a firm opinion. "Mentally," she said, "Chris is well ahead of Evonne. Evonne has a physical edge, but if they met today, I'd have to pick Chris."

## Little Bo Pete

He stands barely more than 6 feet tall, and in the outsize world of big-time college basketball, this means that Dwight (Little Bo Pete) Lamar often finds himself playing in the shadow of towering defenders. Pity the defenders. Rabbit-quick and cocky, Lamar leaves even the slickest defense men muttering



Jim Bradshaw—Lafayette Advertiser

Lamar: Pity the defenders

in disbelief as he tosses up his long, looping jump shot from improbable spots on the court—and with uncanny accuracy. "I consider it a lay-up," boasts Lamar, "when I get within 15 feet of the basket. And when I start hitting from 35 feet out, the coach doesn't even bat an eye." Thus, it hardly comes as a surprise to his coach and teammates at Southwestern Louisiana that Lamar is the country's leading collegiate scorer with an average of 36.7. Lamar himself views the title with characteristic cool. "Winning is the big thing," says the 20-year-old junior. "After we win, I feel like I've just listened to a great jazz album."

Last week the sweet music ended for the Ragin' Cajuns from USL. Playing in the National Collegiate Athletic Association championship tournament, USL lost

to fourth-ranked Louisville, 88-84; and along with such highly touted teams as Marquette and Minnesota, the Cajuns will watch this week's finals from the sidelines. But even in defeat, USL stirred considerable excitement—thanks to Lamar's extraordinary talents.

Although some fans regard him rather as a statistical curiosity, Lamar is in fact a dazzling showman. Even if his path is clear to the basket, Lamar rarely bothers with an easy lay-up; instead, he much prefers to take his distinctive jump shot and hang in the air, twisting and gyrating, before releasing the ball. He can switch the ball from one hand to the other in mid-flight, and Cajun fans still speak in awed tones of the time last season when Lamar went up, pirouetted in the air—and sank a 20-foot basket.

Lamar assembled his impressive repertory of shots and moves in a Columbus, Ohio, recreation center, where day after day he worked his lithe body through a tangle of arms and legs. "I was always shooting over people," Lamar recalls. "I had to get the ball in the air—or get it slapped down my throat." Most of the time, Lamar played half-court games or challenged bigger kids in grueling one-on-one duels. "When there was no one around," he says, "I'd make believe there was. I'd get out on the court alone, double-pumping, putting the ball behind my back, jumping up and doing all sorts of crazy things."

**Find:** Interestingly, Lamar had only two scholarship offers when he graduated from Columbus's East High School—even though his team had won the state championship. College recruiters were more eager to land the team's biggest star—Ed Ratleff, who chose Long Beach State (NEWSWEEK, Jan. 24). "I didn't want Bo," admits USL coach Beryl Shipley. "I wanted Ratleff. I threw in a scholarship for Bo because I hoped he'd bring Ratleff along."

But before long, Shipley realized that he had quite a find in Lamar. Last December, USL met heavily favored Long Beach State in the finals of the Bayou Classic, and more than 8,000 fans jammed USL's Blackham Coliseum for the confrontation between the former teammates. Long Beach threw up a tight zone defense that momentarily puzzled Lamar, and Ratleff led his team to a half-time lead. But after the intermission, there was no stopping Little Bo Pete. Soaring high with his jump shot, Lamar pumped in a game-high 38 points—and USL upset Long Beach, 90-83. "Lamar is the purest shooter I've seen," muttered Long Beach coach Jerry Tarkanian.

Away from the courts, Lamar spends much of his free time working with boys' clubs—and reading fashion magazines. "I'd like to be a model someday," he says. "Dressing in next year's fashions is my hobby. But clothes cost money." Will Dwight Lamar skip his senior year and turn pro? "No, I don't think so," he says. "But if the pros come up with a million-dollar package, who could blame me?"